mentioned in Chapter I. They have exercised no influence on Jewish history. During the whole of the Middle Ages there were occasional conversions of Christians or pagans to Judaism, as that of one of the knights of Charlemagne; and, so long as these were not forbidden by the Church, there were conversions of pagan or Christian slaves belonging to Jews; by adopting Judaism they improved their position in their master's house.

### (b) *Baptisms in the Nineteenth Century*

When the French Revolution and the incipient emancipation of the Jews seemed to be opening up a new era of equality for all men, many Jews in Western and Central Europe considered themselves bound to comply with the demands of their non-Jewish neighbours and to discard their peculiarities, including their religion. The centre of this movement was Berlin, where Moses Mendelssohn by his German translation of the Bible had paved the way for the approach of the Jews to German civilization. But while he himself remained an orthodox Jew and contended that one could at the same time be a good Jew and a good European, his children adopted Christianity. There was hardly a Jew of any standing in Berlin at the beginning of the nineteenth century who adhered to his inherited faith. About the

middle of the century the tendency to baptize diminished in Germany, as under the influence of liberal ideas and religious tolerance professing Jews were no longer socially ostracized. Baptisms reached their lowest point in 1876, when in Prussia only 50 Jews adopted Protestantism. Since then baptisms have again become more frequent, possibly as a result of the reviving anti-Semitism.

According to an estimate by De la Roi,[1] in the nineteenth century 205,000 Jews adopted Christianity—

[1] "Judentaufen im 19. Jahrhundert" in the review *Nathaniel,* Nos* 3 and 4 (Berlin, 1899).